
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 9

September 2007

Battlefield Band, Dougie MacLean Usher in a “September to Remember”

September in Central New York is characterized equally by the sights and sounds of high school football, the 50-degree swings in temperature, the sadness at seeing the kids go back to school (uh, sniffle)... and great Celtic music. This September is no different. In this month alone, there are no less than seven Irish or Scottish festivals or cultural events, a burgeoning local music scene, and rare area appearances by some of the most talented and revered musical acts of our time. So without further ado, let's jump right into the events of the month... a September to Remember.

Legendary Scottish Band Comes to the Night Eagle Café



Marking a strong September of their own, the Night Eagle Café welcomes one of Scotch-Irish music's most enduring acts, **Battlefield Band**, on Sunday, September 30th at 8 PM. "The Batties," as they are fondly known, were formed in the late '60s by four student friends; fusing ancient traditional musical instruments with synthesizers and other keyboards, and have continued playing with the same passion and joy ever since. Founder Alan Reid has assembled what many are calling the best lineup ever -- most of whom weren't even born when the band gained its initial following -- to pick up the mantle of going "Forward With Scotland's Past." Today, after 30 years, they still lead the way for Scottish music, being awarded the first Best Live Act by the first annual Scots Trad Music Awards in 2003. Make plans to come to the Night Eagle Café and see the band that led one reviewer to say "What the internationally renowned Irish band, the Chieftains, has done for traditional Irish music, Battlefield Band is doing for the music of Scotland ...". Tickets are \$30, although the savvy shopper can save \$5 by ordering tickets on-line. The Night Eagle Café (<http://www.nighteaglecafe.org/>) is located at 200 State Street in Binghamton, NY.

Dougie MacLean to Perform at the Earlville Opera House

Dougie MacLean holds a place in his native Scotland that can only be compared with artists like Bob Dylan or Christie Moore, but here in the States he remains for many an undiscovered pleasure. While audiences might have a passing familiarity with his early work with the seminal Scottish folk bands the Tannahill Weavers and Silly Wizard, or with cover versions of his songs by performers like Kathy Mattea, Mary Black or Dorothy Keane, American fans have not had many opportunities to experience MacLean as a live performer. That can all change on September 16th when Dougie MacLean makes a very rare 2007 U.S. tour appearance at the Earlville Opera House.



Although he has composed orchestral works and film scores, Dougie MacLean is best known for his songs, including "Ready for the Storm" -- the song that introduced him to American audiences when it was covered by Kathy Mattea -- and "Caledonia," an unofficial Scottish anthem that hit No. 1 on the charts. MacLean's melodies retain echoes of the ancient music of Scotland, but his emotionally intimate lyrics touch people of all cultures. His beautifully understated guitar work and infectious voice are as instantly comforting as an old friend, whether his masterful compositions are introducing you to something altogether new or reminding you of something long forgotten. Tickets for the 4 pm show range from \$21 to \$31... and they are expected to go quickly. The Earlville Opera House (<http://www.earlvilleoperahouse.com>) is located on East Main St. in Earlville NY.

Earlville Opera House Welcomes Gaelic Storm for Two Performances



Fresh on the heels of Dougie Maclean's show, the Earlville Opera House brings in one of the most popular touring Celtic bands in the country, **Gaelic Storm**. On Saturday, September 22nd, Gaelic Storm -- yes, the steerage band from the movie *The Titanic* -- will be performing at 6 PM and then again at 9 PM. For the past ten years, Gaelic Storm has taken traditional Irish melodies and acoustic instruments and created original songs and arrangements full of life and rhythm. Known for their energy-laden live performances, Gaelic Storm is "...contemporary Irish music at its best." Tickets for each show range from \$16 to \$26. The Earlville Opera House (<http://www.earlvilleoperahouse.com>) is, six days later, still located on East Main St. in Earlville NY.

Night Eagle Café Plays Host to Enter the Haggis

From the minute they take the stage, the non-stop infectious energy of **Enter the Haggis** makes it impossible for anyone to stay seated. Long a favorite of Celtic music lovers in the area, ETH comes into the **Night Eagle Café** on Sunday, September 16th at 8:00 PM. Enter the Haggis has built an international touring and recording career based on its unique approach to Celtic-based music and high-energy performances, and are easily on their way to a well-deserved ranking as one of the most exciting live bands playing today. If you haven't seen them... well, go see them. Don't take it from me; the Irish American News calls them "...a high octane, tremendously entertaining band." Tickets for the show are \$22; \$17 if bought on-line.



"Crafting a new Canadian sound" -- The McDades Come to the Night Eagle Café



On Thursday, September 20th, the Night Eagle Café brings in the multi-talented, wildly diverse and multiply-awarded band, **The McDades**, for a special 8 PM appearance. Winners of the 2006 Canadian Folk Music Awards for Best World Group & Best Instrumental Group, the 2007 Independent Music Award for Best World Album Traditional, and the 2007 Juno Award for best Roots/Traditional Album Group, the McDades are siblings Shannon, Solon and Jeremiah McDade, multi-faceted guitarist Andy Hillhouse, and world percussionist Francois Taillefer. Tickets for the show are \$22, but are available on-line for \$17. The Night Eagle Café (<http://www.nighteaglecafe.org/>) is located at 200 State Street in Binghamton, NY.

Book Review:
“The Midnight Choir”
Submitted by Mark Sisti

“Even when you think you know what the law says, some smart-arse in a wig finds a new wrinkle in an old rule and you watch some sniggering thug waltz out of court. When the Law is a bouncing ball on a spinning wheel, all that a righteous man can aim for is order.”

These are the words by which Dublin Garda Detective Inspector Harry Synnott conducts his life and his career, a career spent striving to ensure that order prevails, occasionally at the expense of truth or the law.

Synnott is one of the protagonists in Gene Kerrigan’s “The Midnight Choir,” which at first appears to be about a series of unconnected incidents in Dublin and Galway. A disturbed man stands on the edge of a Galway pub roof ready to take a suicidal leap. An American couple is robbed by a woman wielding a vial of what she claims to be HIV-infected blood. A young woman files a complaint of rape against the son of a well-to-do businessman. A father drops his young daughter off at school before going about his own occupation, casing a local jewelry store as a target for burglary.

As the story unfolds it becomes clear that the seemingly separate episodes are in fact inextricably intertwined, together with previous incidents. Kerrigan skillfully weaves the threads into an intricate web, but be cautioned: no matter how delicate a web may be, it is inevitable that someone will be trapped in it.

Synnott is not a typical one-dimensional Dirty Harry vigilante; his view of justice is personal and ambiguous. He is shunned by many of his fellow officers because he previously testified in court against some policemen in the brutal beating of a prisoner. In his testimony, however, Synnott rearranges the truth so that, while assuaging his conscience by informing on the officers who administered the beating, he tailors his testimony to ensure the defendant’s conviction. Ironically, he becomes known as “the cop who told the truth.”

Harry, along with his partner, Rose Cheney, is investigating allegations of rape brought by a young woman against the son of a wealthy businessman, while simultaneously working to solve a jewelry-store heist and trying to help a sometime-informant who has been arrested for her holdup of the American couple. Through it all – as he has been throughout his career – Harry is sustained by his moral rectitude and his acute sense of morality and justice.

Meanwhile, in Galway, policeman Joe Mills is investigating a mysterious double murder, probably committed by a man he’s just rescued from a rooftop suicide attempt. When the would-be jumper is rescued, Mills discovers he is covered with blood, and the only statement he will make is an enigmatic, “I’d never hurt a woman before.” While the investigation leads to the discovery of two bodies, neither is a woman, and Joe Mills is unable to figure out to whom the man is referring.

Eventually, revelations uncovered in the Galway case lead to a personal and professional crisis that threatens to shatter every moral precept upon which Harry Synnott has based his life, as one of his old cases resurfaces to raise serious questions about justice and the law, about truth and responsibility, and about power and principles.

Underlying everything in the novel is the new Ireland, and in particular, Dublin, with its revitalized booming economy. What becomes clear in this novel is that, with all the positives that come with the “Celtic Tiger” economy, there is a dark side to it as well, as everyone wants a piece of the fortunes they see being made. It’s an economy where one character tries to change his fortune by changing his name from the almost-generic Paddy Murphy (“too Irish”) to Robert Garcia, but in truth nothing is changed; he is still the owner of a failed jewelry store stuck in a corner of Dublin the affluence has missed. Kerrigan’s point is clear: for all its superficial changes, nothing is really different in the new Ireland, except that violence previously committed for ideological purposes has become violence for financial gain.

What saves this from becoming merely another police procedural novel is the depth of character rarely found in this genre. Even the most minor characters are clearly drawn, with flaws intact, and they all claim some level of empathy from the reader. Dark and moody without ever becoming dreary, *The Midnight Choir* is an intelligent and insightful analysis of the ethical and moral ramifications and consequences of taking the wrong actions for the right reasons.

From the Irish Kitchen (recipes suitable for clipping)

This month's recipe – “Guinness BBQ Chicken”

This recipe, submitted by Beth Loftis, comes from the Karott Productions' “Guinness Recipes” [website](#). In a tongue-in-cheek public service announcement, they write: “Be advised that all these recipes call for Guinness Extra Stout and not draught. You can make a reasonable facsimile of Irish pub Guinness by mixing a 3 to 1 ratio of draught to stout. This only applies outside of Ireland. The closer you are to Dublin, the better it tastes. Your mileage may vary.”

INGREDIENTS:

1 teaspoon seasoned salt	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 broiling/frying chicken (about 3 lbs) cut into serving pieces	1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 bottle of Guinness	1 tablespoon dark molasses
1 tablespoon dark brown sugar	1/8 teaspoon red pepper sauce







Rub seasoned salt evenly over chicken. Arrange chicken in a single layer in shallow 2-quart baking dish. Mix remaining ingredients in small bowl; pour over chicken pieces. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight; turn chicken over several times during marinating. Preheat coals in outdoor barbeque. Remove chicken from marinade; reserving marinade. Arrange chicken, skin-side up, on cooking rack 5-7 inches above hot coals. Cook until underside of chicken is dark brown, 20-25 minutes. Brush it with marinade. Turn chicken over; brush chicken with marinade. Cook until underside of chicken is dark brown, 20-25 minutes longer. Turn chicken over; continue cooking until chicken is fork tender, 5-10 minutes longer, brushing often with marinade. Serve hot or cold.

If you try this recipe, feel free to share your experience with all of us; and of course, if you have a recipe you'd like to share, please contact Beth Loftis at bloftis@adelphia.net.





So is it a coincidence that September is the month we get rid of... we send our children to school AND it's the month with the most Irish Festivals? Yeah, probably... but no matter what, you've got to be impressed with the number of festivals and get-togethers being held throughout the area this month. Check these out:

🍷 **Irish 2000** (Sep 14-15) The Irish 2000 Music and Arts Festival, long a mainstay in New York's Celtic Cultural Corridor, has expanded to a two-day celebration, at the Altamont Fairgrounds. The 11th Annual Irish 2000 Music and Arts Festival has added an all-new Celtic punk rock festival on Friday night. On Saturday, the festival rocks on with more than 20 performances on three stages, with a fourth stage dedicated entirely to Celtic dance and pipe bands – another festival first. “Expanding to two days gives us the opportunity to devote Friday night to great Celtic rock. Then, on Saturday, we return with 12 hours of non-stop music-- with more rock and traditional music,” said Matt Nelligan, president of Irish 2000. Performers at this year's festival include Flogging Molly, Gaelic Storm, Teada, Seven Nations, Enter the Haggis, The Celtic Tenors, Young Dubliners, The Tossers, Greenwich Meantime, and many more. Tickets for the festival are: Friday, \$20 at the gate (\$15 in advance), Saturday, \$18 at the gate (\$15 in advance), with a special 2-Day Pass available for \$25; by advance sale only. For more information, visit their web site at <http://www.irish2000fest.com/welcome.asp>.

-  **Syracuse Irish Festival** (Sep 7-8) On Sept 7-8, downtown Syracuse will be touched with a tint of green as the Syracuse Irish Festival once again takes to the streets. In total, performances will take place on two separate stages in Clinton Square, by such Celtic and Irish bands as The Makem and Spain Brothers, Young Dubliners, Traonach, Rathkeltair, Greenwich Meantime, Searson, The TownPants, Hadrian's Wall, and others. New this year will be a Gaelic Language Mass, slated for 10 AM on Saturday. The festival, which runs from 5-11 PM on Friday and 10 AM to 11 PM on Saturday, is free. For more info, check <http://www.syracuseirishfestival.com/>.
-  **Hooley on the Hudson VI** (Sep 2) The 2007 "Hooley on the Hudson" will be held on Sunday, September 2nd, on the Strand Plaza in Kingston, NY. The event is free and features music, food, dancing, Celtic vendors, storytelling, and children's activities. Taking the stage will be The Andy Cooney Band, Greenwich Meantime, MacTalla M'or, Cliudan, John Gilligan and more. For more information, visit <http://www.ulsteraoh.com/>.
-  **Elmira Irish Festival** (Sep 22) The Elmira Hibernian-sponsored Irish Festival will be held this year from 1:00 PM to 11:00 PM on September 22nd, at the Hibernian Center grounds at 701 Kinyon St on Elmira's Southside. Admission is free. This year's Festival looks to be one of the best ever with many of the top name Irish Entertainers, including The TownPants, Pat Kane and West O'Clare, the Stoutmen and more. A complete menu of food and beverages will be offered. Those attending should bring lawn chairs as limited seating is available.
-  **13th Rochester Irish Festival** (Sep 7-9) Started in 1994, the Rochester Irish Festival is committed to the ideal of staging an event in an atmosphere conducive to families and children, with entertainment that is dynamic, vibrant and energetic. This year's lineup includes Rathkeltair, the Dady Brothers, Seanache, Greenwich Meantime, The TownPants, Cliudan and others. For more information, check <http://www.rochesteririshfestival.org>.
-  **Annual "Irish Day"** (Sept 3) On Monday, Sept. 3rd, from 3 PM until dark, the annual "Irish Day" will be held at the Lock 20 Canal Park on Rte 49 in Marcy, as the last concert in 2007's "Betsy the Barge" series. Providing the Irish music will be Cliudan, Vince Colgan, John Gilligan, and a dance demonstration by the Johnston School of Irish Dance, food, and a fireworks display at dusk.
-  **30th Annual Capital District Scottish Games** (Sept 1-2) It's a full Celtic festival of the arts at the Altamont Fair Grounds, with competition in piping, drumming, athletics, dance, massed bands and more. Featured performers at this year's Capital District Scottish Games are the Brigadoons, Kevin McKrell and The Hard Road Céilidh Band, Hair of the Dog, Colin Grant-Adams, the Glengarry Bhoys and more. For more information, check out <http://www.scotgames.com/>.

RANDOM RAMBLINGS

-  **Halfway to St. Patrick's Party at the Utica Zoo** On Saturday, Sept 22nd, there will be a "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" celebration at the Utica Zoo, from 6 to 10 PM. Entertainment will be provided by the Blarney Rebel Band. Stay tuned for more details.
-  **Some last-minute business** The ladies at **Accents of Ireland** (New Hartford Shopping Center) wanted us to remind you that they have recently added The Elders CDs to their music section, and that their sweater shipment of traditional and new designs has just arrived from Ireland! ...In more business news, we have it on good authority that there is a new Irish pub in the area! It's called the **Salty Shamrock**, and it's located at 320 South Washington in Herkimer. That's about all we know right now -- but we're willing to go and do some research for our readers!...Finally, don't forget the **Traditional Irish Breakfast** at Betty's Diner (River Road, Marcy). The next one will be on September 15th.

Celtic Club Calendar Finally, here's the Irish Musical and Cultural calendar for September.

Sep 1-2	Capital District Scottish Games	Altamont Fair Grounds	Altamont NY	8 AM – 6 PM Sat 10 AM – 5 PM Sun	\$18 (Sat), \$12 (Sun)
Sep 2	Hooley on the Hudson	Strand Plaza	Kingston NY	11:30 AM - 9:00 PM	Free
Sep 2	Syracuse Irish Session	HalfPenny Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Sep 3	Irish Day	Lock 20 Canal Park	Marcy	3:00 PM	Free
Sep 7	The Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Sep 7	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 7-8	Syracuse Irish Festival	Clinton Square	Syracuse	5-11 PM Fri 10 AM - 11 PM Sat	Free
Sep 7-9	Rochester Irish Festival	Camp Eastman	Irondequoit, NY	3 – 11 PM Fri 12 – 11 PM - Sat 12 – 6 PM Sun	\$10/day (\$8 adv); \$20 Weekend
Sep 8	Traditional Irish Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Sep 8	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 9	Syracuse Irish Session	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Sep 14	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 14	Rattlin' Bog	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Sep 14-15	Irish 2000	Altamont Fairgrounds	Altamont NY	Fri -5:30 -11 PM Sat – 11:30 - 11 PM	Fri - \$20;\$15 adv Sat - \$18;\$15 adv 2-Day Pass \$25
Sep 15	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 16	Dougie MacLean	Earlville Opera House	Earlville	4 PM	\$21-\$31
Sep 16	Enter the Haggis	Night Eagle Café	Binghamton	8:00 PM	\$22 (\$5 less on-line)
Sep 20	The McDades	Night Eagle Café	Binghamton	8:00 PM	\$22 (\$5 less on-line)
Sep 21	Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Sep 21	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 22	Gaelic Storm (2 shows)	Earlville Opera House	Earlville	6 and 9 PM	\$16-26
Sep 22	Halfway to St. Patrick's	Utica Zoo	Utica	6 – 10 PM	TBD
Sep 22	Traditional Irish Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Sep 22	Elmira Irish Festival	AOH Center	Elmira NY	1 PM – 11 PM	Free
Sep 22	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 28	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 28	TBD	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Sep 28	Donal O'Shaughnessey	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Sep 30	Battlefield Band	Night Eagle Café	Binghamton	8:00 PM	\$30 (\$5 less on-line)

That wraps it up for this month. If you have anything you want to add to this newsletter, feel free to contact us at sistia@adelphia.net, bloftis@verizon.net or marksisti@adelphia.net.